(47.)

His Majesties DECLARATION

To all His Loving Subjects,

Touching

The CAUSES & REASONS

That moved Him to Dissolve

The Two last

PARLIAMENTS.

Published by His Majesties Command.

LONDON,

Printed by the Assigns of *John Bill*, *Thomas Newcomb*, and *Henry Hills*, Printers to the Kings most Excellent Majesty. 1681.

His Majesties
DECLARATION
To all His Loving Subjects,
Touching
The CAUSES & REASONS
That moved Him to Dissolve
The Two last
PARLIAMENTS.

Published by His Majesties Command.

LONDON,
Printed by the Assigns of John Bill, Thomas Newcomb, and Henry Hills, Printers to the Kings most Excellent Majesty. 1681.

His Majesties
DECLARATION

To all His Loving Subjects,

Touching

The CAUSES & REASONS

That moved Him to Dissolve

The Two last

PARLIAMENTS.

IT was with exceeding great trouble, that We were brought to the Dissolving of the Two last Parliaments without more benefit to Our People by the Calling of them: But having done Our part in giving so many opportunities of providing for their Good, it cannot be justly imputed to Us, that the Success hath not answered Our Expectation.

We cannot at this time but take notice of the particular Causes of Our Dissatisfaction, which at the beginning of the last Parliament, We did recommend to their care to avoid, and expected We should have had no new Cause to remember them.

We Open'd the last Parliament which was held at *Westminster*, with as Gracious Expressions of Our readiness to satisfie the Desires of Our Good Subjects, and to secure them against all their just Fears, as the weighty Consideration, either of preserving the Establish'd Religion, and the Liberty and Property of Our Subjects at home, or of Supporting Our Neighbours and Allyes abroad, could fill Our heart with, or possibly require from Us.

And We do solemnly Declare, That We did intend, as far as would have consisted with the very Being of the Government, to have Comply'd with any thing, that could have been propos'd to Us, to accomplish those Ends.

We ask'd of them the Supporting the Alliances We had made for the preservation of the General Peace in Christendom; We recommended to them the further Examination of the Plot; We desir'd their advice and Assistance concerning the preservation of *Tanger*; We offer'd to concur in any Remedies that could be proposed for the Security of the Protestant Religion, that might consist with preserving the Succession of the Crown, in its due and legal Course of Descent; to all which We met with most unsuitable Returns from the House of Commons: Addresses, in the nature of Remonstrances, rather than of Answers; Arbitrary Orders for taking Our Subjects into Custody, for Matters that had no relation to Privileges of Parliament; Strange illegal Votes, declaring divers eminent Persons to be enemies to the King and Kingdom, without any Order or Proces of Law, any hearing of their Defence, or any Proof so much as offer'd, against them.

Beſides theſe Proceedings, they voted as follow-eth on the 7th of *January* laſt;

Reſolved, *That whoſoever ſhall Lend or cauſe to be Lent by way of Advance, any Money upon the Branches of the Kings Revenue, ariſing by Cuſtoms, Exciſe, or Hearth-money, ſhall be adjudged to hinder the Sitting of Parliaments, and ſhall be reſponſible for the ſame in Parliament.*

Reſolved, *That whoſoever ſhall buy any Tally of Anticipation upon any part of the King's Revenue, or whoſoever ſhall pay any ſuch Tally hereafter to be ſtruck, ſhall be adjudged to hinder the Sitting of Parliaments, and ſhall be reſponſible for the ſame in Parliament.*

Which Votes, inſtead of giving Us Aſſiſtance to ſupport Our Allyes, or enable Us to preſerve *Tanger*, tended rather to diſable Us from Contributing towards either, by Our Own Revenue or Credit; not onely expoſing Us to all Dangers that might happen either at home, or abroad; but endeavouring to deprive Us of the Poſſibility of Supporting the Government it ſelf, and to reduce Us to a more helpleſs Condition then the meaneſt of Our Subjects.

And on the 10th of the ſame Month they paſt another Vote, in theſe words,

Reſolved, *That it is the Opinion of this Houſe, That the Proſecution of Proteſtant Diſſenters upon the Penal Laws, is at this time grievous to the Subject, a weakning of the Proteſtant Intereſt, an Encouragement to Popery, and dangerous to the Peace of the Kingdom.*

By which Vote, without any regard to the Laws eſtabliſh'd, they aſſumed to themſelves a Power of Suſpending Acts of Parliament; whereas Our Judges and Miniſters of Juſtice neither can, nor ought, in reverence to the Votes of either or both the Houſes, break the Oathes they have taken, for the due and impartial Execution of Our Laws; which by Experience have been found to be the beſt Support, both of the Proteſtant Intereſt, and of the Peace of the Kingdom.

Theſe were ſome of the unwarrantable Proceedings of that Houſe of Commons, which were the occaſion of Our parting with that Parliament.

Which We had no ſooner Diſſolv'd, but We caus'd another to be forthwith Aſſembled at *Oxford*; at the Opening of which, We thought it neceſſary to give Them warning of the Errors of the former, in hopes to have prevented the like Miſcarriages; and We requir'd of Them to make the Laws of the Land their Rule, as We did, and do reſolve, they ſhall be Ours: We further added, That what We had formerly and ſo often Declared concerning the Succeſſion, We could not depart from: But to remove all reaſonable Fears that might ariſe from the Poſſibility of a Popiſh Succeſſor's coming to the Crown, if Means could be found, that in ſuch a Caſe, the Adminiſtration of the Government might remain in Proteſtant Hands, We were ready to hearken to any Expedient, by which the Religion Eſtabliſh'd might be Preſerv'd, and the Monarchy not Deſtroy'd.

But contrary to Our Offers and Expectation, We ſaw, that no Expedient would be entertain'd but that of a total Excluſion, which We

had

had ſo often declar'd, was a Point, that in Our Own Royal Judgment, ſo nearly concern'd Us both in Honour, Juſtice, and Conſcience, that We could never conſent to it: In ſhort, We cannot, after the ſad Experience We have had of the late Civil Wars, that Murder'd Our Father of Bleſſed Memory, and ruin'd the Monarchy, conſent to a Law, that ſhall eſtabliſh another moſt Unnatural War, or at leaſt make it neceſſary to maintain a Standing Force for the Preſerving the Government and the Peace of the Kingdom.

And We have reaſon to believe, by what paſs'd in the laſt Parliament at *Weſtminſter*, that if We could have been brought to give Our Conſent to a Bill of Excluſion, the Intent was not to reſt there, but to paſs further, and to attempt ſome other Great and Important Changes even in Preſent.

The Buſineſs of *Fitz-Harris*, who was Impeach'd by the Houſe of Commons of High Treaſon, and by the Houſe of Lords referr'd to the ordinary Courſe of Law, was on the ſudden carried on to that extremity, by the Votes which the Commons paſs'd on the 26th of *March* laſt, that there was no poſſibility left of a Reconciliation.

The Votes were theſe,

Die Sabbati 26° Martii, poſt Meridiem.

Reſolved, *That it is the undoubted Right of the Commons in Parliament Aſſembled, to Impeach before the Lords in Parliament any Peer or Commoner, for Treaſon, or any other Crime or Miſdemeanor; and that the refuſal of the Lords to proceed in Parliament upon ſuch Impeachment, is a denial of Juſtice, and a violation of the Conſtitution of Parliaments.*

Reſolved,

Resolved, *That in the case of* Edward Fitz-Harris, *who by the Commons hath been Impeach'd of High Treason before the Lords, with a Declaration, That in convenient time they would bring up the Articles against him for the Lords to Resolve, That the said* Fitz-Harris *should be proceeded with according to the course of Common Law, and not by way of Impeachment at this time, is a Denial of Justice, and a Violation of the Constitution of Parliaments, and an Obstruction to the further Discovery of the Popish Plot, and of great danger to His Majesties Person, and the Protestant Religion.*

Resolved, *That for any Inferiour Court to Proceed against* Edward Fitz-Harris, *or any other Person lying under an Impeachment in Parliament, for the same Crimes, for which he or they stand Impeach'd, is a high Breach of the Priviledge of Parliament.*

It was a Matter extremely sensible to Us, to find an Impeachment made use of to delay a Tryal, that We had directed against a profes'd Papist, charg'd with Treasons against Us of an extraordinary Nature: And certainly the House of Peers did themselves Right in refusing to give countenance to such a Proceeding.

But when either of the Houses are so far transported, as to Vote the Proceedings of the other to be a Denial of Justice, a Violation of the Constitution of Parliaments, of Danger to Our Person and the Protestant Religon, without Conferences first had to examine upon what Grounds such Proceedings were made, and how far they might be justified; This puts the two Houses out of capacity of transacting business together, and consequently is

the

the greateſt Violation of the Conſtitution of Parliaments.

This was the Caſe, and every day's continuance being like to produce new Inſtances of further Heat and Anger between the two Houſes, to the diſappointment of all Publick Ends, for which they were Call'd, We found it neceſſary to put an end to this Parliament likewiſe.

But notwithſtanding all this, let not the reſtleſs Malice of ill Men, who are labouring to poyſon Our People, ſome out of fondneſs of their Old Beloved Commonwealth Principles, and ſome out of anger at their being diſappointed in the particular Deſigns they had for the accompliſhment of their own Ambition and Greatneſs, perſwade any of Our Good Subjects, that We intend to lay aſide the uſe of Parliaments: For We do ſtill Declare, That no Irregularities in Parliaments, ſhall ever make Us out of Love with Parliaments, which We look upon as the beſt Method for healing the Diſtempers of the Kingdom, and the onely Means to preſerve the Monarchy in that due Credit and Reſpect which it ought to have both at home and abroad.

And for this Cauſe We are Reſolved, by the Bleſſing of God, to have frequent Parliaments; and both in and out of Parliament, to uſe Our utmoſt Endeavours to extirpate Popery, and to Redreſs all the Grievances of Our good Subjects, and in all things to Govern according to the Laws of the Kingdom.

And We hope that a little time will ſo far open the Eyes of all Our good Subjects, that Our next

meeting in Parliament, shall perfect all that Settlement and Peace which shall be found wanting either in Church or State.

To which, as We shall Contribute Our utmost Endeavours, so We assure Our Self, That We shall be Assisted therein by the Loyalty and good Affections of all those who consider the Rise and Progress of the late Troubles and Confusions, and desire to preserve their Countrey from a Relapse.

And who cannot but remember, That Religion, Liberty and Property were all lost and gone, when the Monarchy was taken off, and could never be reviv'd till that was restored.

Given at Our Court at Whitehall, *the Eighth day of* April 1681.

At the Court at *Whitehall*,
April the Eighth, 1681.

IT is this day Ordered by His Majesty in Council, That this Declaration be forthwith Printed and Published, and Read in all Churches and Chappels throughout this Kingdom.

Francis Gwyn.